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Maine Jobs Council Annual Report, 2005-2006

State Workforce Investment Board

Maine Jobs Council

Garret Oswald

Maine Department of Labor

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In March 2005, the Division of Labor Market Information Services presented to the Workforce Cabinet the “state of the workforce” report entitled, “Trends and Implications of the Maine Workforce.” The report highlighted the impact that technology, innovation, globalization, management restructuring and changing demographics have had on altering Maine’s economic landscape over the last 50 years.

The report concluded that there are several key challenges we face that will ultimately be shaped by the policy decisions that we make today to chart the direction of Maine’s workforce and economic future. There are significant trends impacting the state of the workforce - changing demographics, slowed workforce growth, the aging of our workforce, rapid advancements in technology and globalization.

At the September 16, 2005, MJC Policy Committee workshop, members received a briefing from Maine Development Foundation Executive Director, Laurie Lachance, which provided an environmental scan of the major current and emerging workforce and economic conditions that should drive policy decisions. The workshop led to the articulation of a set of core values and guiding principles by the Policy Committee and subcommittee liaison’s. The core values and guiding principles are:

- ◆ Promotion of workforce diversity;
- ◆ Creating and attracting innovation;
- ◆ Improving access to higher education;
- ◆ Building the creative economy; and
- ◆ Reducing income disparity among women and low-wage workers.

While the MJC attempts to address the significant workforce issues facing the state, members of the Policy



Committee and representatives of each of the sub-committees concurred that it is important that these core values and guiding principles become a fundamental part of the Maine Jobs Council policy focus.

Maine Jobs Council Policy Focus:

1. Connect workforce development to economic needs through outreach and education.

Workforce development service providers and the Maine Jobs Council will take steps to engage in a dialogue with students, educators, workers and businesses to help them better understand the demands of the global knowledge-based economy. The dialogue will emphasize the importance of every individual’s need to engage in learning and to build their knowledge during a lifetime of education and work.

Maine’s workforce system, comprised of programs and services, will forge stronger connections to the business community to identify the jobs and skills needed to promote the Governor’s economic vision. Workforce, education and economic development service providers will work toward combining resources to provide more training and education to workers and employers.

The message embedded in the conversation will emphasize the significance of growing Maine’s economy by creating and attracting innovation through our talented and diverse workforce.

Current and/or Proposed Strategies:

- ◆ Identify industry clusters including the occupations and skills that will be needed to fill jobs. Workforce development programs will be organized around industry clusters. Through higher education, workers will be attracted to explore training and careers in high-growth, high-demand; expanding and emerging industries.
- ◆ Develop cooperative agreements between business and industry and the public sector to leverage private sector investment in training. Multi-employer strategies can alleviate the financial burden on single employers investment in training and build a richer pool of talent by training more workers. The workforce development

system providers can help broker relationships between employers and education and training providers to produce qualified workers and link them to jobs.

2. Develop the skills needed for low-wage workers, including women and people with disabilities, for jobs that lead to reducing income disparity and creating a high quality of life for all.

Increasingly, occupational qualifications are short-lived. We must assist Maine workers to adapt more rapidly to changing work requirements and forces in the creative economy so they remain highly qualified. Along with the changing composition of employment has come vast changes in the kinds of occupations and careers available to Maine workers. The articulation of relevant education and skills standards remains our most potent force for economic development.

Maine’s economic future is dependent on a creative economy fueled by a talented, highly-skilled workforce that can adapt to the emerging technological advances across many industries. To attract high-wage jobs, we must concentrate on producing more high-skilled workers. We need to create opportunities that position low-income individuals, unemployed and entry-level incumbent workers to more effectively participate in the workforce and benefit from the economy.

We need to promote barrier-free employment and skills training opportunities that provide livable wages, leading to worker economic security.

Current and/or Proposed Strategies:

- ◆ Promote and invest in higher levels of training for low-wage incumbent workers;
- ◆ Promote workforce diversity and expand access to workforce services by reaching out to low-wage, low-skilled workers, women and the disabled;
- ◆ Promote and expand Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLAs) by attracting more workers to invest in training and more businesses to sponsor employees;
- ◆ Expand post-employment and job retention efforts; and
- ◆ Support the efforts of the ABLE ME team to expand services and resources within the CareerCenters to assist disabled workers gain access to jobs and training.

3. Provide opportunities for lifelong learning and expand/create incentives for continuous learning by improving access to higher education.

We create and attract innovation by striving to effectively reposition Maine workers and communities from maturing industries that are losing employment, to emerging ones that are adding jobs. We have witnessed profound shifts in the composition of business and industry over the last twenty years. The fast pace of technological change and the forces of global competition will continue to impact the composition of business and industry and types of employment generated by the Maine economy.

By promoting innovation and increasing investment education and training, we can help shrink income disparity among geographic regions of the state.

We must tap into Maine’s talented incumbent workforce and continually provide the resources and tools they need to keep their skills current. Maine’s diverse workforce, from those who are working and the unemployed, must be continually retooled and trained in order to create and attract innovation and economic growth.

We must create and attract innovation by supporting entrepreneurship and microenterprise development.

Build a stronger public education pipeline to produce better-trained graduates. We should promote career development linked with economic development priorities as an integral part of the entire PK-20 experience. Further, Maine’s education and training institutions need to expand, transfer and articulate opportunities.

Current and/or Proposed Strategies:

- ◆ Expand Articulation Agreements through the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) model;
- ◆ Prior Learning Assessments; and
- ◆ Work with industry leaders, workforce and education service providers to identify Career Lattices for low-wage workers.

4. Build support for workers to manage their careers.

We need to promote barrier-free employment and skills training opportunities that provide livable wages and reduce income disparity leading to worker economic security.

We must assist regions where economic activities are stagnant or declining to gain new vitality and economic competitiveness. In other regions where economic growth is rapid and jobs are abundant, we must ensure that disenfranchised populations are provided with opportunities to participate and improve their living standards.

Additionally, many low-wage workers need work support to advance in their careers. The kind of support that many unemployed and low-to-moderate wage earners need include improved or increased access to childcare, transportation, affordable housing, healthcare, assistive/ adaptive technology as well as other forms of support.

Current and/or Proposed Strategies:

- ◆ Promote the use of skill-based assessments and credentials;
- ◆ Work Certification/Credential initiative;
- ◆ Expand access to career management tools and resource materials that promote the strong link between job skills and career advancement; and
- ◆ Establish better access as well as stronger, more effective coordination and linkages among programs that are available to provide work supports.

5. Create effective governance and accountability structures among workforce and economic development, education and human service providers.

Performance and accountability are fundamental to the effectiveness of multiple agencies working together to support a more cohesive and integrated workforce, education and economic development system.

To ensure that we have a public workforce system that is positioned to support and promote workforce diversity, to work with business and education to create and

attract innovation, improved access to higher education, build a creative economy and reduce income disparity particularly among women and low-wage workers, we must take steps to:

- ◆ Focus workforce programs on meaningful outcomes;
- ◆ Promote continuous improvement;
- ◆ Streamline governance; and
- ◆ Promote flexibility.

We have a unique opportunity with the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet and the Maine Jobs Council working alongside the Local Workforce Investment Boards and community-based service providers to improve governance and accountability. Integrated performance reporting is more than a shared information system. It requires cross-agency participation and shared practices that support shared accountability for results.

Current and/or Proposed Strategies:

- ◆ Adopt a performance measurement system that provides consistent reporting of labor force outcomes such as the Integrated Performance Information (IPI) Blueprint;
- ◆ Memorandum of Understanding between the MJC-MDOL/BES-LWIBs;
- ◆ Create a statewide staff development and training capacity; and
- ◆ Resource Mapping project.



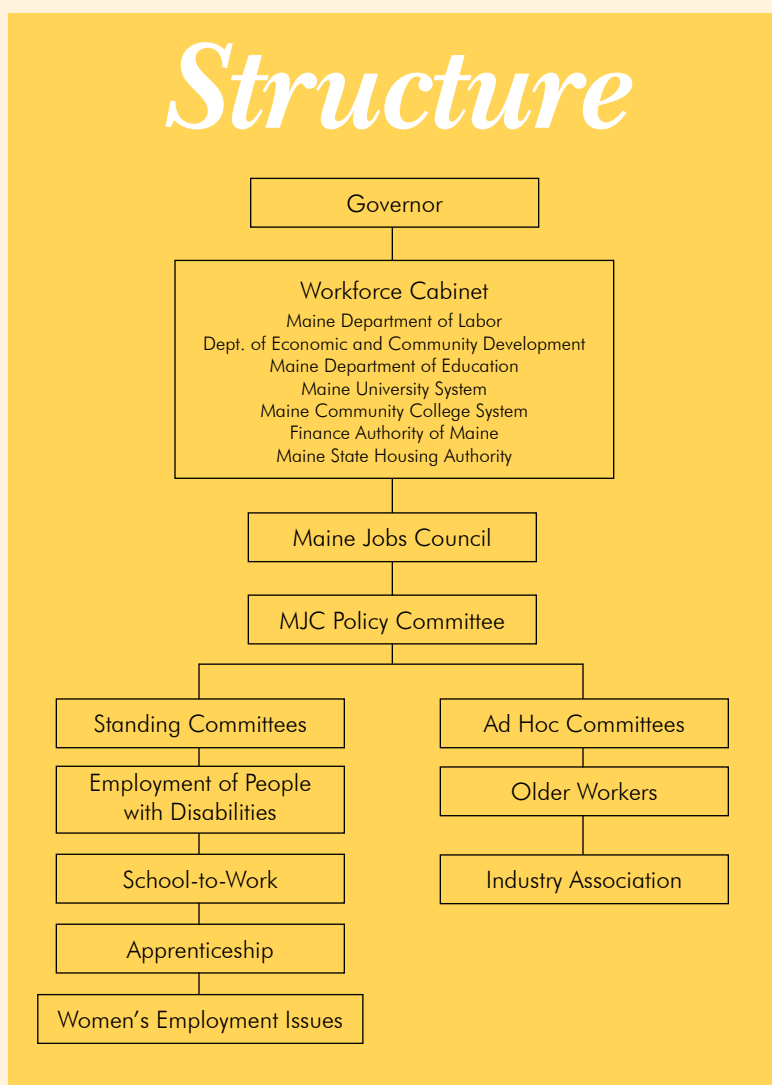
A little over a year ago, a steering committee was established to look at the organizational structure of the Maine Jobs Council, which functions as the State Workforce Investment Board with mandated annual reporting to the Governor and Legislature, and make recommendations about how the Council could be organized differently to be more effective in leading, managing and advising the Workforce Development system in Maine.

The Steering Committee, led by then newly-appointed Maine Jobs Council Chair Phil Dionne of Brunswick, was comprised of representatives from business, education, economic development, workforce development and labor. The vision for the restructured Maine Jobs Council included refocusing on broader workforce policy issues, proactively making recommendations to the Maine Workforce Cabinet, the Governor and Legislature, mobilizing coalitions for action, integrating workforce development into economic development and education and human services systems, and creating overall system accountability.

The Steering Committee recommended that a new organizational structure be put in place for the MJC, to better fulfill its role as the State Workforce Investment Board. Under the new configuration, much of the Council’s work would be done in the standing and ad hoc committees. There are four standing committees of the MJC required by the Workforce Investment Act; Women’s Employment Issues, Commission on Disability and Employment, Youth Transitions and Apprenticeship. The MJC also has two ad hoc committees - an Industry Association Committee and Older Workers Committee. The standing and ad hoc committees meet as needed and coordinate their activities through the newly established Policy Committee, which was another of the Steering Committee’s recommendations. The Policy Committee is a smaller version of the full council with representation from business, education,

economic development, workforce development, labor, and public advocates. Policy Committee ideas, research, evaluations and recommendations will be presented to the full Council for approval and then to the Workforce Cabinet, the Governor or the Legislature. The Policy Committee meets every other month.

The Maine Jobs Council is closely connected to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet, which is responsible for recommending and implementing policy on behalf of the Governor. Maine Labor Commissioner, Laura Fortman, serves as chair of the Workforce Cabinet and as a member of the MJC. Garret Oswald, Director of the Maine Jobs Council, also serves as staff to the Workforce Cabinet.



The Maine Jobs Council

The Vision

- ◆ Maine people will have a high quality of life with rewarding work and prospering businesses.
- ◆ Employers will have skilled workers, and workers will have good jobs. Economic success will be backed up by a world-class workforce development system.

The Mission

The Maine Jobs Council leads, advises and manages the efforts to create a world-class workforce development system in Maine. The Council leads by focusing on the big picture, by setting a tone of collaboration, and by educating policy-makers and the public. The Council advises by making recommendations to the Governor and Legislature. As the Statewide Workforce Investment Board, the Council manages by overseeing the implementation of workforce development programs.

Guiding Principles

- ◆ Skilled workers are essential to economic growth.
- ◆ Everyone should be a lifelong learner.
- ◆ Maine employers, educators, and public policy-makers must support people as lifelong learners, citizens, workers, and family and community members.

The Workforce Development System

- ◆ Provides the means for personal and economic security and job satisfaction.
- ◆ Must be available to everyone of all ages, regardless of circumstances.
- ◆ Must adapt quickly to changing technologies and market demands.
- ◆ Must be easy to understand and navigate.
- ◆ Must be designed by and accountable to workers, employers, and taxpayers.
- ◆ Requires partnership among businesses, schools, organized labor, government and other providers.

*A volunteer group of citizens
from business, labor, education,
community organizations
and the public working
to create a world-class workforce
development system in Maine*

Members and Budget

CLEOS

Anne Beebe-Center
Gary McGrane
Tom Davis
Norman Fournier

Local Board Directors

Pat Boucher
Mike Bourret
Bryant Hoffman
Melanie Arsenaault

Labor

Don Berry
John Leavitt
Ned McCann
Denise Nemeth-Greenleaf
Thomas Targett
Gary McGrane

Education

Kate Grambow
Al Menard

Service Providers

Kathleen Coogan
Kathleen Kearney
Craig Larrabee
Daniel Muth
Susan Percy

Public

Ester Clenott
Chris Hastedt
Sarah Standiford
Linda Smith

Business

Steve Boulett
Phil Dionne, MJC Chair
Greg Dugal
Robert Gardner
Joanne Harris
Matt Hoffner
George Hunter
Lisa Martin
Jeanne Shorey Paquette
Susan Swanton
Peter Thompson
Tuesdi Woodworth

State Government

Commissioner Laura Fortman
Commissioner Susan Gendron
Deputy Commissioner, Jeff Sosnaud

Committee Staff

Peaches Bass - Women's Employment Issues
Steve Duval - Policy
Gene Ellis - Apprenticeship
Denis Fortier - Youth Transitions
Karen Fraser - Commission on Disability and Employment
Mary Frances Gamage - Older Workers
Glenn Mills - Industry Association
Garret Oswald - Director, Maine Jobs Council

Budget

Salaries	\$62,325.40
Non-Personal expenses	<u>9,865.63</u>
Total	\$72,191.03

Committee Reports

Apprenticeship Committee

The Apprenticeship Committee is working on projects with a number of new program sponsors. Working with the Maine Marine Trade Association, new apprentices have been registered, and a cluster of marine trades-related courses will be delivered in Ellsworth. A new two-year apprenticeship program for mental health technicians has also been approved, with training provided through the Charlotte White Center, a nonprofit social services organization in Dover Foxcroft. The committee submitted a report to the Maine Legislature noting the return on investment on the Maine Apprenticeship Program is \$30 for every dollar spent. In the coming year, the Maine Apprenticeship Program will meet with teachers, guidance counselors and school administrators to put added emphasis on pre-apprenticeships.

Commission on Disability and Employment

The Disability Committee reorganized in 2005 and developed operational procedures and by-laws. A recommendation by the commission concerning Maine State Government employment practices for workers with disabilities led to an Executive Order by the Governor calling on Maine State Government to become a model employer of people with disabilities. Working with a variety of partners from the public, private and educational sectors, the commission helped develop a publication, Working Together, which will serve as a strategic plan to maximize employment for people with disabilities.

Industry Association Committee

The Industry Association Committee is developing a strategic plan that will help the committee become more involved in the development of Maine's economic development strategy. The plan will also focus on fostering greater collaboration between industry associations and public agencies in order to increase flexibility in workforce development and training programs to better meet the needs of Maine's industry sectors and workforce. Industry associations participating in this committee represent over 1,000 Maine employers and 100,000 Maine workers.

Older Workers Committee

The Older Workers Committee continues to promote public awareness of the value of older workers in our economy. As part of that outreach, the committee published a brochure on CareerCenter and employment resources for older workers and employers and developed a public service announcement on the value of hiring older workers that is currently being broadcast across the state. The committee is planning a senior-friendly recognition campaign that will be unveiled during National Older Workers Week in September.

Women's Employment Issues Committee

The Women's Employment Issues Committee clarified its membership, developed a statement of purpose and set policy priorities in 2005. The committee worked to see that the State Workforce Investment Plan and business assistance contracts included performance expectations concerning women's wages. The committee played an active role in the Lifelong Learning Accounts pilot project and provided input on a workforce study tracking graduates of the UMO Class of 1994. The committee also tracked and supported Maine legislation on the Family Care Act, the laptop Initiative, Prior Learning Assessments, domestic violence, and a livable wage study.

Youth Transitions Committee (Formerly School-to-Work)

The Youth Transitions Committee is working to ensure that every high school student will be engaged early in an education plan. To that end, the committee is assisting in the development of a resource book to assist students in planning their education and setting goals. The book will be available at middle schools, high schools and CareerCenters. The committee is comprised of 13 members representing the private sector, educational systems and the Departments of Labor and Education.

Maine Jobs Council

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Letters from Chair and Director

Dear Governor Baldacci, Members of the 122nd Legislature and Citizens of Maine,

As Chair of the Maine Jobs Council, I am pleased to forward to you this Annual Report to provide you with information regarding the Council's work for 2005/2006.

The Maine Jobs Council has focused on three major objectives over the last year;

Aligning the MJC Goals with Governor Baldacci's Economic Development Strategy;
restructuring the MJC and its Committees to be more connected and efficient; and increasing MJC employer membership from 34% to 51% to be more of a demand-driven system.

While much progress has been made over the past year, there is still much work to be done. Together with the Economic Development and Education communities, Maine's Workforce Development System must be responsive to the changing needs of Maine employers and workers in this dynamic economy. The Maine Jobs Council will continue to lead, manage and advise the effort to create a world-class workforce development system in Maine.

Phil A. Dionne
Chair of the Maine Jobs Council



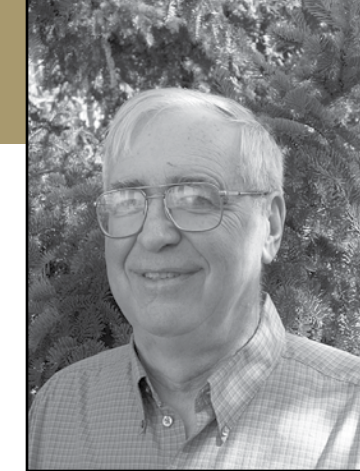
Dear Governor Baldacci, Members of the 122nd Legislature, Governor's Workforce Cabinet, and Maine Jobs Council Members,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter to say "Thank you" to all the members of the Maine Jobs Council for your time, efforts and hard work over the course of the past year. The commitment of the Council members, committee members and staff has been outstanding and has made my job as the new Director of the MJC both exciting and rewarding. I would also like to thank the Governor's Workforce Cabinet for their vision and leadership in aligning Workforce Development with Education and Economic Development in Maine.

As envisioned, the restructured MJC has been much more active with projects, products and policy recommendations coming from the committees. The full Council continues to gain experience and maturity as an organization. Working together with the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, the MJC will lead Maine's Workforce Development System to advance the education and skills of Maine workers and to be responsive to the needs of Maine employers.

Best wishes,

Garret Oswald
Director, Maine Jobs Council



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